United Nations

DP/2010/17/Add.1

Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund

Distr.: General
21 April 2010

Original: English

Annual session 2010
21 June to 2 July 2010, Geneva
Items 2 of the provisional agenda
Annual report of the Administrator

Report of UNDP on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2009

Summary

In line with General Assembly resolution A/RES/59/267, which was reiterated in A/RES/62/246, this report provides a synopsis of management responses to the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and draws attention to specific recommendations directed at the legislative organs of United Nations system organizations. Of the 10 reports (including 2 notes) issued by JIU in 2009, only 5 were relevant to UNDP. This document provides management responses to the recommendations, including an update of the implementation status of recommendations contained in reports issued by JIU in 2008 and 2007. In line with the wishes of the Executive Board and the current United Nations emphasis on simplification and harmonization, the present report was prepared in a format jointly developed with UNFPA.

Elements of a decision

The Executive Board may wish to take note of this report, particularly those aspects of the JIU reports that have particular relevance to the work of UNDP.

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I. Overview of Joint Inspection Unit reports issued in 2009

1. This report provides a summary of UNDP management responses to relevant recommendations contained in the reports issued by the JIU in 2009, including management response to the recommendations that have been directed for consideration by the governing body of UNDP. For a listing of JIU reports and details of recommendations, refer to the JIU website (http://www.unjiu.org/en/reports.htm).

2. Of the 10 reports issued by JIU in 2009 (at the time of this report), 5 reports (including 2 notes) have direct relevance to UNDP. These are: (a) Towards more coherent United Nations system support to Africa (JIU/REP/2009/5); (b) Offshoring in United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2009/6); (c) Selection and conditions of service of executive heads in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2009/8); (d) Corporate sponsoring in the United Nations system (JIU/NOTES/2009/1); and (e) Internships in the United Nations system (JIU/NOTES/2009/2).

II. Synopsis and review of relevant Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations in 2009

3. The management responses to the recommendations contained in the five relevant JIU reports are provided below. See annex 1 for a statistical summary of 2009 JIU reports and annex 2 for a review of relevant recommendations presented by JIU for consideration by the governing body of UNDP.

A. Towards more coherent United Nations system support to Africa (JIU/REP/2009/5)

4. This report provides an evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of the system-wide cooperation framework, drawing on and providing lessons learned and identifying best coordination practices and collaboration methods. Of the 17 recommendations issued by JIU, 2 were directed at the General Assembly and the concerned governing bodies of United Nations system organizations, while 9 were directed at the Secretary-General and the executive head. The remaining 6 recommendations were specifically directed at the General Assembly and/or the Secretary-General as the Chairman of the United Nations Chief Executives Board (CEB) for Coordination.

5. UNDP agrees with the JIU Inspectors that "because of the unique role of the CEB as the only system-wide coordination mechanism . . . it is in a privileged position to play a more proactive and substantive role with regard to enhancing coherence and coordination of the UN system support to Africa" (para 35 of JIU/REP/2009/5).

6. In this regard, UNDP stands ready to support the leading role of the CEB for Coordination in addressing many of the nine key recommendations of the JIU directed at both the Secretary-General as the Chairman of the CEB for Coordination and to the Administrator as executive head of the organization. The recommendations included: (a) strengthen institutional frameworks and share information and best practices among the United Nations system organizations; (b) establish a high-level steering committee for the Regional Coordination Mechanism; (c) establish joint monitoring and evaluation

frameworks; and (d) align planning, programming and budget cycles of country programmes at regional and subregional levels.

7. UNDP continues to actively engage all programme governments in the development, implementation and monitoring of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and in strengthening their institutional capacities. This is consistent with resolution 62/208 on the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of operational activities for development within the United Nations system, which emphasizes the principles of national ownership and of carrying out operational activities for the benefit of the programme countries according to their national policies and development priorities. UNDP will further explore opportunities for collaboration with the regional economic communities in Africa and the Secretariat of the Regional Coordination Mechanism in promoting greater coherence and support to Africa.

8. On the two JIU recommendations forwarded to the governing body for consideration, UNDP (a) supports the call for the General Assembly to review and rationalize roles and responsibilities within the United Nations system and between the different organs, offices and departments pertaining to United Nations system support to Africa (recommendation #1), and (b) reaffirms its commitment to harmonize results-based management (RBM) practices at country level for implementation of the UNDAF in Africa (recommendation #16).

B. Offshoring in United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2009/6)

9. This report assessed offshoring policies, practices and experiences of selected United Nations system organizations with the objective of identifying best practices and lessons learned. Based on the analysis of the experiences of four United Nations organizations – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, World Health Organization and World Food Programme – JIU has proposed recommendations to be used as benchmarks in United Nations system organizations when considering offshoring of targeted business functions to more cost-effective locations.

10. JIU issued 18 recommendations in this report. Two were directed to the CEB for Coordination, 13 were directed to the executive heads of United Nations system organizations when considering or making offshoring decisions or options, and 3 were for the consideration of the governing bodies of United Nations system organizations.

11. While cost savings arising from economies of scales and relatively less expensive national staff may well be expected benefits from offshoring decisions, UNDP believes that other benefits can also be anticipated. These include access to a skilled workforce, business process specialization leading to improved internal controls and better service delivery, and improved staff safety by locating service centres in lower-risk locations. In addition, UNDP considers it necessary to ensure that dedicated staff with appropriate skills are in place to assure appropriate results of offshoring initiatives.

12. UNDP agrees with the 13 JIU recommendations including (a) development of a comprehensive business case with consideration of alternative options; (b) negotiation with the host country government; (c) accounting for the full cost of offshoring; (d) establishment of project oversight teams; (e) seeking funding approval for potential separation liabilities linked to offshoring; (f) appropriate change management planning; (g) ensuring readiness of the Enterprise Resource Planning system to support offshore service centres; (h) ensuring staff

security and disaster plans are in place, and (i) exploring the possibility of joint efforts with existing offshore centres of United Nations system organizations. However, UNDP does not agree with the recommendation to subject its offshoring plans to the High Level Committee on Management since offshoring is a matter to be decided by the governing body of UNDP.

13. On the three specific recommendations forwarded to the governing body for consideration, UNDP agrees with the need to actively engage the Executive Board in any offshoring decisions. This is currently provided for in the context of the submission of the UNDP Biennial Support Budget papers and consultations with the Board (as appropriate) in support of its oversight role (recommendation #15). Therefore UNDP does not see the need for a separate offshoring policy, as recommended by JIU (recommendation #1). In addition, while UNDP supports the recommendation to maintain the international character of the United Nations in staffing of offshore service centres, it is important to balance this benefit with the objective of economic consideration and the interests of the host country governments in offshoring centres (recommendation #7).

C. Selection and conditions of service of executive heads in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2009/8)

14. This report evaluates the legal and institutional framework and practices in the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and executive heads of the United Nations system organizations, including conditions of service, with the objective of establishing harmonized selection criteria and practices. It contains 13 recommendations, of which 1 is addressed to the CEB and 2 to the Secretary-General; the remaining 10 are for consideration by the legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations, including specialized agencies. Of these, only 8 recommendations are relevant to UNDP and presented for the consideration of the governing body.

15. UNDP welcomes this report and supports the general thrust of the JIU recommendations, which promote greater transparency in the selection process of the executive heads and harmonization of practices across the United Nations system.

16. UNDP noted that JIU made specific recommendations for the governing body, which included (a) establish a clear timeline for the selection process to allow for a smooth transition between incumbent and incoming executive heads; (b) request the submission of certificates of good health along with curricula vitae; (c) adopt provisions to limit the term of executive heads to a maximum of two successive terms, not exceeding five years each; (d) ensure that legislative/governing bodies condemn and prohibit unethical practices such as promises, favours, invitations or gifts provided by candidates or their supporting governments during the selection/election campaign in return for favourable votes for certain candidates; (e) adopt provisions that comprehensively address conflicts of interest pertaining to wrongdoing or misconduct allegedly committed by executive heads; and (f) direct the internal oversight or ethics office/function (as appropriate) to investigate, or have JIU investigate, alleged cases of wrongdoing or misconduct by executive heads of system organizations, including retaliation and irregularities relating to financial disclosure statements.

17. Given that the Administrator is appointed by the Secretary-General in consultation with the General Assembly, and in the spirit of harmonization across the United Nations system, UNDP believes that all eight recommendations should be further deliberated by the United Nations Secretariat in consultation with General Assembly counsel or at the Executive Board level) since the Executive Board is accountable to the General

Assembly (through ECOSOC) for implementation of the decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly.

D. Corporate sponsoring in the United Nations system (JIU/NOTE/2009/1)

19. This report assesses the principles, criteria and guidelines governing corporate sponsorship activities with an objective of reducing risks and enhancing the coherence of such activities throughout the system. The Inspectors have defined corporate sponsorship as a form of partnership between the private sector and United Nations entities in which the private sector entity, aiming to enhance its corporate image, supports an event or activity through the provision of financial or in-kind support for promotional purposes, in exchange for publicity and/or to obtain access to a wider audience.

[illegible] This report contains four recommendations. Two are specifically directed to the CEB for Coordination and the other two are directed to the executive heads of United Nations system organizations. UNDP noted the emphatic remarks of the Inspector that the Global Compact is not a regulatory instrument or that it does not 'police', enforce or measure the behaviour or actions of companies and that the participation of a given company in the Global Compact initiative does not provide sufficient guarantee to conclude that it might be an appropriate partner.

20. UNDP welcomes this report and notes that the JIU has cited the Private Sector Division of UNDP for two key initiatives in promoting awareness and strengthening partnerships with the private sector. The first is the UNDP Growing Inclusive Markets initiative, which aims to raise awareness and provide information on how businesses as well as governments and civil society can create opportunities for the poor through market-based approaches. More importantly, it seeks to inspire and provoke action by the private sector. The second is the UNDP Growing Sustainable Business Initiative and its broader work on Inclusive Market Development. This initiative facilitates partnerships between companies and relevant actors from the public sector and civil society to develop and undertake commercially viable business investments in poor countries. The aim is to have a positive impact on local economic development (para. 46 of JIU/NOTE/S/2009/1).

21. On the two recommendations directed to the executive heads of United Nations system organizations, UNDP (a) supports the call for common partnership training programmes to cover the common needs of staff dealing with the private sector in different system organizations (recommendation #3); and (b) considers that the recommendation to extend financial disclosure measures to officials dealing with the private sector (recommendation #4) is unnecessarily extensive since all staff at the D-1 or L6 level are required to comply with the UNDP Financial Disclosure Policy, which is already harmonized with United Nations system organizations.

E. Internships in the United Nations system (JIU/NOTE/S/2009/2)

22. This report reviews the internship programmes across the United Nations system organizations with the objective of identifying key features, best practices and lessons learned for further improvement and clarification of the definition and implementation of these programmes. The Inspector concluded that the internship programme is overwhelmingly

positive for all the parties involved: organizations, supervisors and interns. It is seen as a win-win experience.

23. The report includes nine recommendations directed at the executive heads of United Nations system organizations. UNDP supports the recommendations targeted at improving the experiences of interns in its organizations, including taking steps to provide opportunities to candidates from non-developed countries, ensuring proper orientation programmes and soliciting feedback as part of continuous improvements. On the other policy-related recommendations, including daily meal/transportation allowances and elimination of mandatory breaks for interns to allow them to compete on an equal basis for positions for which they qualify, the matter requires further policy discussion and harmonization, to be led by the policy unit in the United Nations Secretariat.

III. Status of UNDP implementation of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations in 2007-2008

24. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/[illegible]/246, annex I and annex II provide an update of the implementation status of JIU recommendations in 2007 and 2008, respectively.

25. Of the 29 relevant recommendations issued by the JIU in 2008, UNDP has implemented 66 per cent. Of the 37 relevant recommendations issued in 2007, UNDP has implemented 46 per cent. Many JIU recommendations have system-wide impact and ramifications. UNDP is committed to contributing to discussions and deliberations at the various forums in the future.

Annex I: Summary of reports/notes issued by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2009

Report symbol	Name of report	Total recommendations	Total relevant recommendations	Recommendations directed at the Executive Board
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Annex 2: Review of relevant Joint Inspection Unit recommendations in 2009 for consideration by the Executive Board

Recommendation	Remarks
[redacted]	
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]

their curriculum vitae, a certificate of good health signed by a recognized medical facility	the Executive Board level) since the Executive Board is accountable to the General Assembly (through ECOSOC) for implementation of the decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly
(e) The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations should adopt provisions limiting the terms of their executive heads to a maximum of two successive terms, not exceeding five years each (if such provisions have not yet been adopted);	
(f) The legislative governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should condemn and prohibit unethical practices such as promises, favours, deviations, gifts, etc., provided by candidates or their supporting governments in return for favourable votes for the post of executive head during the election/selection campaign;	
(g) The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations should adopt provisions comprehensively addressing conflicts of interest pertaining to wrongdoing/misconduct allegedly committed by executive heads (if such provisions have not yet been adopted);	
(h) The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations should direct the internal oversight or ethics office/function (as appropriate) or JIU, to conduct investigations into wrongdoing or misconduct allegedly committed by executive heads of system organizations, including violations and irregularities relating to financial disclosure statements. The investigating authority should report the outcome of the investigation directly to the legislative body of the respective organization for action. The JIU, however, can undertake on its own initiative such investigations, should it so decide;	
(i) The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations should establish rigorous policies regarding the acceptance of gifts, honours, decorations, etc., by their executive heads, where no such policies currently exist;	
(j) The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations should include in the terms of appointment of their executive heads a provision for a possible termination allowance based on standards of the International Civil Service Commission, where such a provision is missing.	

Annex 3: Implementation status of relevant Joint Inspection Unit recommendations issued in 2008

Report symbol	Name of report	Total recommendations	Total relevant recommendations	Implemented or ongoing	Total or partially implemented to be started
[illegible]	Junior Professional Officer/Associate Expert/Associate Professional Officer programmes in the United Nations system organizations	9	4	4	0
[illegible]	Management review of environmental governance within the United Nations system	12	3	3	0
[illegible]	National execution of technical cooperation projects	10	9	7	6
[illegible]	Review of information and communication technology training services in the United Nations system organizations	6	6	3	3
[illegible]	Review of management of Internet websites in the United Nations system organizations	9	9	7	1
Total	Relevant Joint Inspection Unit recommendations in 2008	46	29	19	10

[illegible] reports issued in 2008 but not relevant to UNDP

[illegible] Review of management and administration in the Universal Postal Union

Annex 4: Implementation status of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations issued in 2007

Report	Name of report	Total recommendations	Total relevant recommendations[1]	Implemented or ongoing	Partially implemented
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible] reports issued in 2007 but not relevant to UNDP

[1] JIU/REP/2007/1: Review of the Working Capital Fund in the World Meteorological Organization

[2] JIU/REP/2007/2: Review of management and administration at the International Civil Aviation Organization

[3] JIU/REP/2007/3: Review of management and administration in the International Maritime Organization

[4] JIU/REP/2007/4: Functioning and staffing of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

[5] JIU/REP/2007/5: Review of the national competitive recruitment examinations as a recruitment tool

[6] JIU/REP/2007/11: Review of management and administration in the World Meteorological Organization

[1] Relevant recommendations are those directed to UNDP and/or of specific relevance to the organization.